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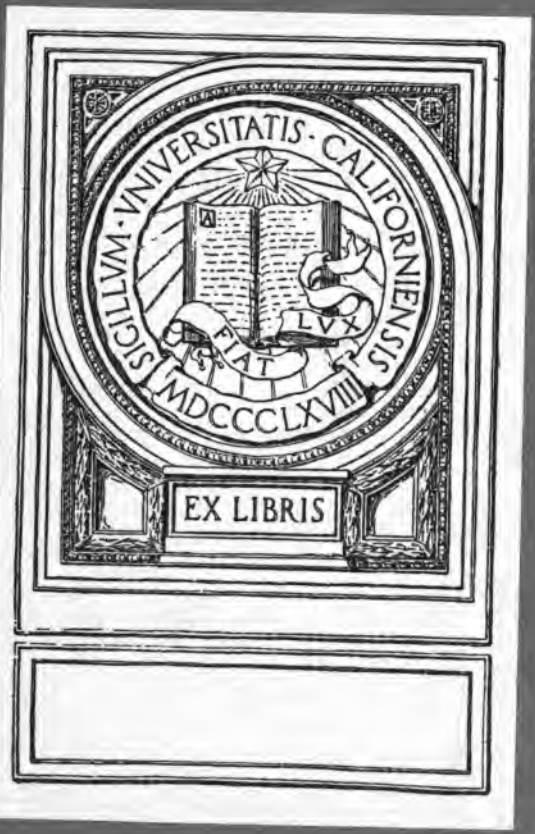

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THE MONROE DOCTRINE

AN ESSAY

BY

A. F. MORRISON

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Read before the Chit-Chat Club, of San Francisco,
December 9, 1895

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THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

(Read before the Chit-Chat Club, of San Francisco, December 9, 1895.)

THE Monroe Doctrine, as it is understood to-day, is something different from what it was at the time of its declaration by President Monroe. The Monroe declaration, aside from the political events that immediately called it forth, was the embodiment of a national sentiment which had grown and developed among our people. But the Monroe Doctrine, as it is understood to-day, is much more comprehensive than the simple declaration made by Monroe. It represents a larger growth and a further development.

What that doctrine is, has never been authoritatively defined. Our understanding of what it is, and its scope, must be gathered from the history of our country and the declarations of our Presidents and other distinguished statesmen, as precedents.

As in the case of the "balance of power" with Europe, we know that our nation believes that the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine is necessary to our safety and welfare. And, like the "balance of power," the doctrine seems to be flexible and elastic; and doubtless the scope of its assertion will, in a large measure, depend upon the circumstances under which it may be invoked.

It will be seen, therefore, that an intelligent understanding of this doctrine must be derived from a review of the events which constitute its history.

As the people of the United States emerged from the

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period of the Revolution and the Confederation, and as the spirit and sentiment of nationality gained deeper root, the vision of a mighty destiny grew upon them until it became an abiding conviction. As the country grew and prospered under a democratic constitution, original to our people, and without a prototype, the further conviction took deep and vigorous root that this nation had a mission to perform in spreading the light and exemplifying the blessings of democratic institutions among the nations of the earth, and especially among the peoples who inhabited these American continents. As the result of two fierce wars with the most powerful nation of the world, we early had what may be called a "past," which was filled with national heroes and with the traditions of heroic deeds. The traditions of those wars kindled and fanned the fires of patriotism, while the consciousness of a great mission and the vision of a great destiny gave a direction and a scope to that patriotism which made it apostolic and extra-territorial, so far as the immediate national boundaries were concerned. Besides all this, the American people had made their country an asylum for those who were disaffected with the tyranny and harsh conditions of the Old World. The fact that they were maintaining such an asylum under the very eyes of the reactionary despotisms then pervading the Old World made the people of this nation feel conscious, and perhaps rightly so, that the success and example of their free institutions were ungrateful things in the eyes of the Old World despotisms. As a result of this consciousness, our people grew suspicious, apprehensive, and jealous of all political influences that might emanate from the Old World. They felt that the preservation of their own institutions depended on their holding aloof from entangling alliances with Europe, and

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in discouraging European intervention in the political affairs of the American continents.

A solemn and influential expression of the first of these feelings was given in Washington's farewell address; and the declaration there made has profoundly affected the policy of this country. Washington said:

"The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

"Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote, relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

"Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

"Why forego the advantage of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor, or caprice?"

But the first distinctively American territorial system or policy — a policy that would exclude European influences from the political affairs of this continent, — seems

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to have been conceived and developed by Jefferson. When Secretary of State, in Washington's Cabinet, he labored persistently to acquire from Spain the right to the free navigation of the Mississippi, and also the cession of an *entrepot* at the mouth of that river. During the time these negotiations were pending, a rupture between England and Spain became imminent, and Jefferson became fearful that England would take advantage of such a war to seize the Spanish possessions lying on our border, including Florida and Louisiana.

On August 12, 1790, he wrote to Gouverneur Morris, the United States informal agent in Great Britain, a letter, in which he says that the conduct of the British Ministry proves that—

"They view a war as very possible; and some symptoms indicate designs against the Spanish possessions adjoining us. The consequence of their acquiring all the country from the St. Croix to the St. Mary's are too obvious to you to need development. You will readily see the dangers which would then environ us. We wish you, therefore, to intimate to them that we cannot be indifferent to enterprises of this kind. That we should contemplate a change of neighbors with extreme uneasiness; and that a due balance on our borders is not less desirable to us, than a balance of power in Europe has always appeared to them. We wish to be neutral, and we will be so, if they will execute the treaty fairly and attempt no conquests adjoining us."

On October 29, 1808, while we were surrounded by the possessions of European powers on all sides, and before the Spanish Colonies had revolted, Jefferson, then President, wrote to William C. C. Claiborne, the Governor of the Territory of Orleans, as follows:

"The truth is that the patriots of Spain have no warmer friends than the administration of the United States; but it is our duty to say nothing and to do

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nothing for or against either. If they succeed, we shall be satisfied to see Cuba and Mexico remain in their present dependence; but very unwilling to see them in that of either France or England, politically or commercially. We consider their interests and ours as the same, and the object of both must be to exclude all European influence from this hemisphere. . . .

"These are sentiments which I wish you to express to any proper characters of either of these two countries, and particularly that we have nothing more at heart than their friendship."

On August 4, 1820, in a letter to William Short, Jefferson speaks of conversations which he had lately had with the Abbé Correa, who for a number of years had been Portuguese Minister at Washington, but who had lately been appointed by the Government of Portugal as Minister to Brazil; and he says:

"From many conversations with him, I hope he sees, and will promote in his new situation, the advantages of a cordial fraternization among all the American nations, and the importance of their coalescing in an American system of policy totally independent of and unconnected with that of Europe. The day is not distant when we may formally require a meridian of partition through the ocean which separates the two hemispheres, on the hither side of which no European gun shall ever be heard, nor American on the other; and when during the rage of the eternal wars of Europe, the lion and the lamb, within our regions, shall lie down together in peace. . . . The principles of society there and here, then, are radically different, and I hope no American patriot will ever lose sight of the essential policy of interdicting in the seas and territories of both Americas the ferocious and sanguinary contests of Europe."

But Jefferson's ideas were, even at this time, somewhat advanced, as will be seen from the following declaration, made this same year (1820) by that sterling American statesman, John Quincy Adams. Mr. Adams was then

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Secretary of State. He tells us, in his diary, that this same Abbé Correa, mentioned in Jefferson's letter to Short, had suggested to him that the United States and Portugal, as "the two great powers of the Western hemisphere" should concert together a grand American system. But Mr. Adams, as his biographer says, after giving vent to some contemptuous merriment, replied "with a just and serious pride":

"As to an American system, we have it; we constitute the whole of it; there is no community of interests or of principles between North and South America."

But, as we shall see later, the opinion of Mr. Adams underwent a great change within the next three years.

About this time, events were fast shaping themselves, both in the Old and in the New World, in a way that brought all of the peoples of this hemisphere into a closer sympathy with each other, and made them anxious to see both continents emancipated from European influences.

The revolutions in the Spanish-American colonies, which commenced about 1810, had become so practically successful by March, 1822, that our Government recognized those colonies as independent states. Spain, however, continued to make desultory attempts to reconquer them for many years after. The revolted colonies naturally looked to us, who had so recently thrown off the European yoke, for sympathy and support. The eloquence of Henry Clay had roused in their favor the sympathy of this nation; and, while our Government maintained a strict neutrality, many were the privateers, fitted out in American ports, which gave unofficial succor to the cause of Spanish-American independence.

Such a change, too, had been worked in the official life of the nation that we find Mr. Adams, the Secretary

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of State who, in 1820, had told the Portuguese Minister that there was "no community of interests or of principles between North and South America," writing now to Mr. Rush, our Minister to England, under date of July 2, 1823, as follows:

"These independent nations [that is, those of South America and Mexico] will possess the rights incident to that condition, and their territories will, of course, be subject to no exclusive right of navigation in their vicinity, or of access to them by any foreign nation. A necessary consequence of this state of things will be, that the American continents henceforth will no longer be subject to colonization. Occupied by civilized nations, they will be accessible to Europeans and each other on that footing alone; and the Pacific Ocean, in every part of it, will remain open to the navigation of all nations in like manner with the Atlantic."

And again, on July 22, 1823, in writing to Mr. Middleton, our Minister to Russia, on the Russian claims to the Northwestern Territory, Mr. Adams said:

"There can perhaps be no better time for saying frankly and explicitly to the Russian Government that the future peace of the world, and the interests of Russia herself, cannot be promoted by Russian settlements upon any part of the American continent. With the exception of the British establishments north of the United States, the remainder of both American continents must henceforth be left to the management of American hands. It cannot possibly be the purpose of Russia to form extensive colonial establishments in America. The new American republics willl be as impatient of a Russian neighbor as the United States."

But a more powerful influence than sympathy for the struggling patriots of Spanish America awakened our people and statesmen to the dangers as well as the undesirability of European neighborhood and influence on this hemisphere. It was the threatened armed inter-

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ference, on behalf of Spain, and against her colonies, by the most powerful league of European states that ever existed. And the danger was still further heightened by the possibility that, as the result of such interference, we might no longer have weak and impoverished Spain for our neighbor; but, instead of her, we might find England in Cuba, commanding the Gulf of Mexico and the mouth of the Mississippi River, France in Mexico, and Russia west of the Mississippi.

After the downfall of Napoleon, and while the Allies were still in possession of France, the Emperors of Russia and Austria and the King of Prussia signed a treaty, which is known in history as the treaty of the Holy Alliance.

The treaty was signed September 26, 1815. The Alliance was finally joined by all the European states except England and the Pope. The avowed purpose of the Holy Alliance was to secure the government of states in accordance with the precepts of the Christian religion; and to this end the allied monarchs, "looking upon themselves as delegated by Providence" to rule over their respective countries, pledged themselves to "lend to one another, on all occasions, and in all places, assistance, aid, and succor." The real purposes of the Alliance seem to have been to check and suppress the growth of liberal and republican ideas.

The members of the Alliance held a number of meetings or congresses from time to time. Among the most important of these congresses was that convened at Troppau, in Silesia, in October, 1820, and which removed later in the same year to Laybach, in Styria. By its resolutions, at Troppau, the Alliance placed "revolt" and "crime" in the same category; and it further resolved—

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"that the powers have an undoubted right to take a hostile attitude in regard to those states in which the overthrow of the government may operate as an example;"

thus announcing, as a principle, the right of the Alliance to forcibly interfere in the internal affairs of other states.

Later, at Laybach, the Alliance announced the principle that all popular and constitutional rights are held as grants from the crown, and not otherwise; and in the spring of 1821, the Congress addressed a circular to the foreign representatives of the assembled sovereigns, in which it declared—

"that useful and necessary changes in legislation and in the administration of states ought to emanate from the free will and intelligent and well-weighed conviction of those whom God has rendered responsible for power. All that deviates from this line necessarily leads to disorder, commotions, and evils far more insufferable than those which they pretend to remedy"; and it denounced as "equally null and disallowed by the public law of Europe, any pretended reform effected by revolt and open force."

As Webster said, this was the "old doctrine of the divine right of kings, advanced by new advocates, and sustained by a formidable array of power."

Under the sanction of this Congress, Austria forcibly suppressed popular revolutionary movements in Piedmont and Naples. In the meantime, in 1820, in Spain, the constitutional, or liberal, party had gained the ascendency, and had compelled Ferdinand the Seventh to accept a liberal constitution.

At a congress of the Alliance, held at Verona in October, 1822, this Spanish revolution was the chief topic of consideration; and from this congress the Alliance issued a circular in which it announced its determination "to repel the maxim of rebellion, in whatever place and

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under whatever form it might show itself"; and a secret treaty was signed, in which the Allies mutually pledged themselves "to put an end to the system of representative governments" in Europe, and to adopt such measures as should destroy the "liberty of the press."

When the Congress of Verona adjourned, it was with the secret understanding that France should invade Spain, set aside the new constitutional government, and restore Ferdinand to his former despotism. France entered Spain with an army of 100,000 men, and succeeded in her task, early in 1823. England protested vigorously against this interference in the internal affairs of Spain, but went no further; although the popular sympathy in England with the Spanish nation was so strong that the incident came near leading to war. The English statesmen of the day were too prudent, however, to wish a war with the Alliance, then in the zenith of its power.

When France had destroyed Spanish liberty, Ferdinand then wished the Alliance to assist Spain to reconquer the revolted colonies in the New World. Some of the most powerful members of the Alliance were agreeable to the enterprise. It was evident that unless Spain received such assistance her colonies would be lost to her forever; and she herself would have been willing to reward the powers who might assist her by ceding to them part of the territory recovered. It was known that France coveted Cuba as her reward for what she had already done in restoring Ferdinand's despotism, and that she also expected to get Mexico as her reward for her assistance in the new enterprise. Russia would probably take the Pacific Coast.

The agitated and delicate condition of affairs at this time, both in the Old and New World, is shown by the fol-

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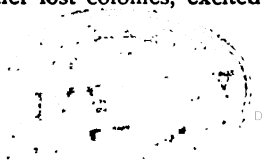
lowing incident touching the Island of Cuba: England, being aware of the designs of France on that island, had determined to anticipate France, by sending a squadron to take possession of Cuba. About this time, also, the domestic situation in Cuba, where the people were divided in sympathy between the party of the king and the party of the Cortes, together with constant fears of slave uprisings, became so intolerable that many Cubans looked to the United States, and many to England, as a means of escape from the desperate condition of the island. In this state of affairs our Government was informed by the French Minister at Washington that his Government had positive information of designs by England upon Cuba.

Mr. Rush, our Minister to England, was instructed to notify the British Government of the existence of such rumors, and that the United States could not see with indifference the possession of Cuba by any European power other than Spain—a declaration suggestive of the later Monroe Doctrine. Mr. Canning, on behalf of the British Government, disavowed any intention to take Cuba; but, at the same time, he declared that his Government would not see with indifference the occupation of that island by either France or the United States; and he proposed an understanding, without formal convention, between the British, French, and American Governments, that Cuba should be left in the possession of Spain. President Monroe assented to this, leaving England to secure a similar assent from France. Such was the condition of affairs in Europe and America during Mr. Monroe's second administration.

The course of the Holy Alliance in Europe, and the possibility of its interference in behalf of Spain for the recovery of her lost colonies, excited grave apprehen-



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sion in this country. The possibility of having such unwelcome neighbors as France or England in Cuba, France in Mexico, and Russia west of the Mississippi, made our statesmen realize that the day might not be far off when "our detached and distant situation," and the "advantages of so peculiar a situation," spoken of by Washington, might be things of the past; and that the theater of the eternal strifes of Europe might be transferred to our own borders, if not to our own soil. If such things came to pass, how could we escape "interweaving our destiny" with Europe, which Washington so much feared?

Luckily for us, England, with her great sea power, found her interests at this time lying in the same direction as our own.

We had already acknowledged the independence of the revolted Spanish colonies. England would have liked to do the same thing; but she feared such a course would involve her in a war with the Holy Alliance. Since the revolt of those colonies and the abolition of the exclusive colonial monopolies of Spain, a large and valuable commerce had grown up between the colonies and England. A return of the colonies to their former allegiance, or a transfer of their possession to any of the allied powers, would almost inevitably restore such monopolies, and thus deprive England of a large part of her rich trade.

England was satisfied that, if left to themselves, the colonies could maintain their independence; and she was, therefore, very anxious that the Alliance should not interfere. Accordingly, in August and September, 1823, Mr. Canning proposed to our Minister, Mr. Rush, that the United States and England should make "a joint declaration before Europe" to the effect that while

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neither England nor the United States desired any portions of the Spanish colonies for themselves, and while they would not obstruct any amicable relations between Spain and her colonies, they, nevertheless, could not see with indifference the intervention of any foreign power, or the transfer to such power of any of those colonies.

Mr. Rush replied that his instructions did not authorize him to take such a step, but, nevertheless, he would assume the responsibility, if the British Government would acknowledge the independence of the colonies. The British Government was not yet ready, however, to go as far as that. Mr. Rush reported these conversations to his Government. President Monroe immediately submitted the matter to Jefferson and Madison. Jefferson replied to Monroe on October 24, 1823; and his letter is so important in the history of the Monroe Doctrine, and so excellent, that I will give it in full:

"MONTICELLO, Oct. 24, 1823.

"DEAR SIR: The question presented by the letters you have sent me is the most momentous which has ever been offered to my contemplation since that of Independence. That made us a nation; this sets our compass and points the course which we are to steer through the ocean of time opening on us. And never could we embark upon it under circumstances more auspicious. Our first and fundamental maxim should be, never to tangle ourselves in the broils of Europe. Our second, never to suffer Europe to intermeddle with cis-Atlantic affairs. America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should, therefore, have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. While the last is laboring to become the domicile of despotism, our endeavor should surely be to make our hemisphere that of freedom.

"One nation, most of all, could disturb us in this pursuit; she now offers to lead, aid, and accompany us

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in it. By acceding to her proposition, we detach her from the bands, bring her mighty weight into the scale of free government, and emancipate a continent at one stroke, which might otherwise linger long in doubt and difficulty. Great Britain is the nation which can do us the most harm of any one of all on earth, and with her on our side we need not fear the whole world. With her, then, we should sedulously cherish a cordial friendship, and nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more side by side in the same cause. Not that I would purchase even her amity at the price of taking part in her wars.

"But the war in which the present proposition might engage us, should that be its consequence, is not her war, but ours. Its object is to introduce and establish the American system of keeping out of our land all foreign powers, of never permitting those of Europe to intermeddle with the affairs of our nations. It is to maintain our own principle, not to depart from it. And if, to facilitate this, we can effect a division in the body of the European powers, and draw over to our side its most powerful member, surely we should do it. But I am clearly of Mr. Canning's opinion — that it will prevent instead of provoke war. With Great Britain withdrawn from their scale and shifted into that of our two continents, all Europe combined would not undertake such a war. For how would they propose to get at either enemy without superior fleets? Nor is the occasion to be slighted which this proposition offers, of declaring our protest against the atrocious violations of the rights of nations, by the interference of any one in the internal affairs of another, so flagitiously begun by Bonaparte, and now continued by the equally lawless Alliance, calling itself Holy.

"But we have first to ask ourselves a question: Do we wish to acquire to our own confederacy any one or more of the Spanish provinces? I candidly confess that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States. The control which, with Florida Point, this island would give us over the Gulf of Mexico and the countries and isthmus bordering on it, as well as all

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those whose waters flow into it, would fill up the measure of our political well-being. Yet, as I am sensible that this can never be obtained, even with her own consent, but by war, and its independence, which is our second interest (and especially its independence of England), can be secured without it, I have no hesitation in abandoning my first wish to future chances, and accepting its independence, with peace and the friendship of England, rather than its association at the expense of war and her enmity.

"I could honestly, therefore, join in the declaration proposed, that we aim not at the acquisition of any of those possessions, that we will not stand in the way of any amicable arrangement between them and the mother country; but that we will oppose with all our means the forcible interposition of any other power, as auxiliary, stipendiary, or under any other form or pretext, and most especially their transfer to any power by conquest, cession, or acquisition in any other way. I should think it, therefore, advisable that the Executive should encourage the British Government to a continuance in the dispositions expressed in these letters by an assurance of his concurrence with them as far as his authority goes; and that, as it may lead to war, the declaration of which requires an act of Congress, the case shall be laid before them for consideration at their first meeting, and under the reasonable aspect in which it is seen by himself.

"I have been so long weaned from political subjects, and have so long ceased to take any interest in them, that I am sensible I am not qualified to offer opinions on them worthy of any attention. But the question now proposed involves consequences so lasting and effects so decisive of our future destinies as to rekindle all the interest I have heretofore felt on such occasions, and to induce me to the hazard of opinions which will prove only my wish to contribute still my mite toward anything which may be useful to our country. And, praying you to accept it at only what it is worth, I add the assurance of my constant and affectionate friendship and respect."

Mr. Madison also approved of co-operation with England in making such a declaration, but he believed that

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Mr. Canning's proposal, though made with an air of consultation as well as concert, was founded on a predetermination to take the course marked out, whatever might be the stand taken by our Government.

When the matter came up in Monroe's Cabinet, some were so cautious as to hesitate about the advisability of making the declaration at all, as it might lead to war.

On the other hand, Mr. Adams tells us, in his diary, that Mr. Calhoun believed that the Holy Alliance "had an ultimate eye on us; that they would, if not resisted, subdue South America. . . . Violent parties would arise in this country, one for and one against them, and we should have to fight on our own shores for our own institutions"; and he believed in authorizing Mr. Rush to join England in making the declaration. Mr. Adams opposed our making a joint declaration with England, except on the basis of England's acknowledging the independence of the Spanish-American states. He did not believe that the Alliance would try to establish a monarchy among us; but, at most, if they should subdue the Spanish provinces, they would, after partitioning them among themselves, recolonize them. He believed Russia might take California, Peru, and Chili; France might take Mexico; and England, if she could not resist the course of events, would at least take Cuba as her share in the scramble.

If we should join England in such a declaration as proposed, we would occupy an uncomfortable and anomalous position, with England as our neighbor in Cuba and France in Mexico. Mr. Adams strenuously insisted that, unless England should put herself on record and recognize the independence of those colonies, we should make our own declaration independently of her. As events turned out, it is fortunate that Mr. Adams' views

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prevailed, and fortunate also that England delayed recognizing those states. Otherwise, instead of a distinctively American and patriotic declaration of policy, the property of our own country alone, we should have had a joint English and American declaration, to the effect that England and the United States, while desiring no portion of the territory of the Spanish colonies for themselves, would not permit any intervention of other powers against them or their transfer to any other power. It would have been England's declaration as much as our own.

As a result of the deliberations of Monroe's Cabinet, the President's next annual message to Congress, on December 2, 1823, contained two passages which have since become historical, as containing what is known as the Monroe Doctrine. These passages are as follows:

(1) "At the proposal of the Russian Imperial Government, made through the Minister of the Emperor residing here, a full power and instructions have been transmitted to the Minister of the United States at St. Petersburg, to arrange, by amicable negotiation, the respective rights and interests of the two nations on the northwest coast of this continent. A similar proposal had been made by his Imperial Majesty to the Government of Great Britain, which has likewise been acceded to. The Government of the United States has been desirous, by this friendly proceeding, of manifesting the great value which they have invariably attached to the friendship of the Emperor, and their solicitude to cultivate the best understanding with his Government. In the discussions to which this interest has given rise, and in the arrangements by which they may terminate, the occasion has been judged proper for asserting, as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European power."

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(2) "It was stated at the commencement of the last session that a great effort was then making in Spain and Portugal to improve the condition of the people of those countries, and that it appeared to be conducted with extraordinary moderation. It need scarcely be remarked that the result has been so far very different from what was then anticipated. Of events in that quarter of the globe with which we have so much intercourse, and from which we derive our origin, we have always been anxious and interested spectators. The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly in favor of the liberty and happiness of their fellow-men on that side of the Atlantic. In the wars of the European powers, in matters relating to themselves, we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy so to do. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defense. With the movements in this hemisphere we are, of necessity, more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective governments. And to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole nation is devoted. *We owe it, therefore, to candor, and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere; but with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and on just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifes-*

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tation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States. In the war between those new goverments and Spain we declared our neutrality at the time of their recognition, and to this we have adhered, and shall continue to adhere; provided no change shall occur which, in the judgment of the competent authorities of this Government, shall make a corresponding change on the part of the United States indispensable to their security.

"The late events in Spain and Portugal show that Europe is still unsettled. Of this important fact no stronger proof can be adduced than that the allied powers should have thought it proper, on a principle satisfactory to themselves, to have interposed by force in the internal concerns of Spain. To what extent such interposition may be carried, on the same principle, is a question to which all independent powers whose governments differ from theirs are interested, even those most remote; and surely none more so than the United States. Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is, not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the government *de facto* as the legitimate government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy; meeting, in all instances, the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none. *But in regard to these continents circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can any one believe that our Southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition, in any form, with indifference.* If we look to the comparative strength and resources of Spain and those new governments, and their distance from each other, it must be obvious that she can never subdue them. It is still the true policy of the United States to leave the parties to themselves, in the hope that other powers will pursue the same course."

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While the relation between these two passages of the President's message is intimate, in that both look to the exclusion of European influence from our hemisphere, yet they occur in widely separated parts in the President's message, and, in reality, treat of two conditions of things differing widely in their origin. The first passage declares against future European colonization on these continents. The second declares against the extension of the political system of the Holy Alliance to this hemisphere, and against the intervention of any European power in the affairs of the Spanish-American states, for the purpose of oppressing them or in any other manner controlling their destiny.

The first passage is frequently misunderstood. Some have even gone so far as to claim that it means there must be no more European colonies planted on these continents; whereas, in fact, it treats of a condition of things that has ceased to exist; and it is not the part of the message that can be invoked in our day as an active principle, without giving it a meaning not intended by the message.

The striking similarity of language between the first passage of the message relating to colonization and the letter of Adams to Rush, quoted above, leaves little doubt that this passage originated with the Secretary of State.

The declaration in this passage had its origin in our dispute with Russia concerning the Northwest Boundary, Russia claiming as far south as fifty-one degrees north latitude, while England and our Government claimed a large part of the same territory.

It will be seen from Mr. Adams' letter to Rush, and from this passage in the President's message, that it was the intention of the Secretary, and of the President, to

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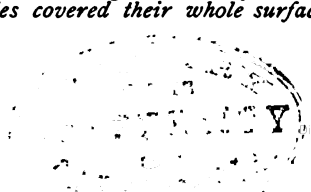
declare merely a principle of the public law of nations, which they held to be then applicable to the condition of these continents. The message did not seek to claim that, if any part of the territory of these continents were then in a wild state of nature, unclaimed by any civilized nation, such territory would still, nevertheless, be closed to European colonization. What both the President and Mr. Adams claimed was, that all of the territory of both of these continents was then "occupied by civilized nations,"—meaning that every part of the surface of both continents had an owner whose rights were recognized by the law of nations. Therefore, there was no room for future claims founded on discovery and colonization — methods of acquiring territory, in wild, unclaimed countries, recognized by the law of nations. It was the custom of those times, also, that colonial trade was completely monopolized by the mother country. Thus it will be noticed that Mr. Adams, in his letter to Rush, explains this position, when he says that, by reason of the fact that these Spanish-American colonies have become independent states, hereafter "their territories will, of course, be subject to no exclusive right of navigation in their vicinity, or of access by any foreign nation."

When Mr. Adams was himself President, he confirmed this view, in his message to the House of Representatives on March 26, 1826, in which, referring to the non-colonization portion of Monroe's message, he said:

"The principle had first been assumed in the negotiation with Russia. It rested upon a course of reasoning equally simple and conclusive. With the exception of the existing European colonies, which it was in no wise intended to disturb, the two continents consisted of several sovereign and independent nations, *whose territories covered their whole surface.* By this their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independent condition, the United States enjoyed the right of commercial intercourse with every part of their possessions. To attempt establishment of a colony in those possessions would be to usurp, to the exclusion of others, a commercial intercourse which was common to all."

Thus it will be seen that if Mr. Adams' position, that the whole of the two continents was occupied by independent and civilized nations, were conceded to be correct as a fact, then the conclusion must follow that they would not be subjects for future colonization by other powers than the owners; for any attempt by one power to colonize the territory of another would be an act of war. So the correctness of the principle stated in this first paragraph of the message depended on a geographical question of fact: Was it true that the whole of the continents was occupied?

England denied the correctness of the position assumed as to colonization. It must be conceded that there is an apparent inconsistency and a very loose statement, if not mistake, of facts in this part of the message. This is noticeable on a comparison of this passage with the second passage of the message. In the first part, the President speaks of "the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain." But at that time the northern half of North America had not assumed a "free and independent condition." On the contrary, it was under Russian and British dominion—a fact plainly recognized in the second passage, where the President says: "With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere."

But whether or not the assumption of President Monroe or Mr. Adams was correct, at that time, the declaration contained in this part of the message has now ceased

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to be of much practical importance, unless it is given the new meaning of "no more European colonies," which, however, was not the original intention. For, by reason of treaties, and long possession, the boundaries of the nations claiming both continents are now universally recognized to include the whole surface; and they have been so determined and adjusted that there is no further room for acquisition of territory by right of discovery and colonization.

Historically, it is the second passage of the message which contains the basis of the present active principle involved in the Monroe Doctrine. Its utterance was received with scarcely more enthusiasm in this country than in England. Brougham said:

"The question in regard to Spanish America is now I believe, disposed of, or nearly so; for an event has recently happened than which none has ever dispensed greater joy, exultation, and gratitude over all the freemen of Europe; that event which is decisive on the subject is the language held with respect to Spanish America in the message of the President of the United States."

And Sir James Mackintosh said:

"This evidence of the two great English commonwealths (for so I delight to call them, and I heartily pray that they may be forever united in the cause of justice and liberty) cannot be contemplated without the greatest pleasure by every enlightened citizen of the earth."

England's position toward the Holy Alliance, backed by the declaration of President Monroe, not only deterred the Alliance from its contemplated enterprise in America, but, as Mr. Calhoun said, gave it a blow from which it never recovered. Its influence began to decline, and it finally perished in the European revolutions of the middle of this century.

But as an evidence of the conservatism that has from

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the beginning pervaded the Government of the United States, it is to be noted that, while the sentiments pervading the Monroe Doctrine were a part of the historic growth of our people; while the doctrine, when it was uttered, met with a hearty, popular welcome; while it has ever been cherished by our people, and seems almost to be a passion with them,—yet it has never received the sanction of Congress, and it remains to this day, so far as official sanction goes, only a declaration of the administration which uttered it and of subsequent administrations which have approved or amplified it.

The declaration of Monroe itself accomplished its immediate purpose. The designs of the Alliance on this hemisphere were abandoned. When the danger was past, our statesmen hesitated about affirming the doctrine as a part of our national policy. Some acted from timidity, some from conservatism and a belief that its assertion would lead us into difficulties and disputes that were none of our affairs, and that it was contrary to our traditional policy, so earnestly recommended by Washington, of not entangling ourselves in the affairs of Europe. In the very Congress to which President Monroe's message was addressed, Henry Clay introduced the following resolution in Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union:

"*Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:* That the people of these States would not see, without serious inquietude, any forcible intervention by the allied powers of Europe, in behalf of Spain, to reduce to their former subjection those parts of the continent of America which have proclaimed and established for themselves, respectively, independent governments, and which have been solemnly recognized by the United States."

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A similar resolution was also introduced by Mr. Poinsett, of South Carolina, but neither resolution was ever called up for action.

As to the meaning of this second passage of the message, there has probably been as much misunderstanding as in case of the first.

In Mr. Canning's proposal to Mr. Rush, he asked that the joint declaration to be made by both countries should declare not only against intervention by the Holy Alliance, but also that the two Governments themselves did not aim at the possession of any of the Spanish colonies, and that they could not with indifference see any portion of them transferred to any other power.

We have seen also that in Jefferson's letter to Monroe he advised a joint declaration, stating —

"that we aim not at the acquisition of any of those possessions; that we will not stand in the way of any amicable arrangement between them [the colonies] and the mother country; but that we will oppose with all our means the forcible interposition of any other power as auxiliary, stipendiary, or under any other form or pretext, and most especially their transfer to any power by conquest, cession, or acquisition in any other way."

Monroe's message, however, is confined to making the following declarations:

First. Against "any attempt on their part [that is, the Holy Alliance] to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere." Literally, this meant the system of the Holy Alliance. It is scarcely probable that it was intended to convey any idea of hostility to monarchical institutions as such, because during this very Monroe administration, we were among the first to recognize the Emperor Iturbide in Mexico and the Emperor Dom Pedro in Brazil.

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Second. It declared against "any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them [the Spanish-American States] or controlling in any manner their destiny, by any European power."

It will be observed that the message does not follow either Canning or Jefferson, in declaring against new acquisitions of territory by European powers; and there is nothing in the message that would preclude a European power from acquiring the territory of an independent American state, provided it were done by voluntary treaty, and provided there were no oppression or coercion, or no interposition by third powers. Furthermore, there is nothing in the message that would preclude a European nation from making war upon an American state, if such war were made for a just cause and not for purposes of a political or ambitious nature; and there is nothing that would prevent the European state acquiring the territory of the American state as the result of such a war. For the right to wage war almost necessarily involves the latter proposition. On this point, Mr. Richard Henry Dana, Jr., has said:

"Confining itself to a declaration against interposition to oppress or control, or to extend the system of the Holy Alliance to this hemisphere, the message avoids committing the Government on the subject of acquisition, either by the United States or the European powers, and whether by cession or conquest. Possibly the administration may have paused at Mr. Jefferson's caution in his letter referred to: 'But we must first ask ourselves a question — Do we wish to acquire any one or more of the Spanish provinces? — before we can unite in the proposed declaration.'"

And Mr. Dana further says:

"When we compare the declarations in the message with the joint declaration proposed by Mr. Canning and

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recommended by Mr. Jefferson, and consider our own prior history and our then position, it certainly is a fair inference that the administration purposely avoided any specific and direct statement as to transfer of dominion by competent parties in the way of treaty or by conquest in war."

Evidently the doctrine, as declared by Monroe, recognizes the complete independence of the different American States; and, of course, this would include their right, of their own volition, to do with their own territory or their own form of government, as they pleased, even to ceding their territory to a European power.

But at this day the Monroe Doctrine is not confined within the letter of the Monroe declaration. It is very questionable if the United States would permit any European nation to acquire more territory, from any independent nation on these Continents, than such European nation is at present entitled to, even by voluntary cession. And it is almost inconceivable that the United States would permit such close neighbors as the British provinces on the north, or even Cuba, to fall into other European hands than their present owners. It is quite as certain also that the United States would not at this day permit any such acquisition of territory by a European power, as the result of a lawful or just war.

As early as 1845, President Polk, in dealing with the Northwestern Boundary question, sought to give to the colonization declaration of the Monroe message the meaning of "no more European colonies." But he confined his declaration to North America. He said:

"It should be distinctly announced as our settled policy that no future European colony or dominion shall, with our consent, be planted or established on any part of the North American Continent."

And in 1848, when different parties of the white people

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of Yucatan offered the sovereignty of that country to the United States, Great Britain, and Spain, respectively, President Polk, in a message to Congress, declared that:

"We could not consent to a transfer of this dominion and sovereignty to Spain, Great Britain, or any other power."

There are two notable instances in our career, in one of which we seem to have repudiated the Monroe Doctrine, and in the other of which we seem to have abandoned it.

The first is the case of the Panama Congress.

In 1825, the Spanish-American countries called a congress at Panama for the purpose of discussing and adopting measures affecting the welfare and development of the American continents, and of forming some sort of an alliance, based on the Monroe Doctrine, as applicable to this hemisphere. President Adams accepted the invitation to join the Congress and appointed envoys whose names he sent to the Senate. After a bitter debate in both houses, the Senate finally concurred in the appointment of the envoys; but they were only to take part in a diplomatic way. In the House of Representatives when the question of making an appropriation for the expenses of the envoys came up, the House adopted a resolution stating that the United States ought not

"to form any alliance offensive or defensive, or negotiate respecting such alliance with all or any of the South American republics; nor ought they to become parties with them, or either of them, to any joint declaration for the purpose of preventing the interference of any of the European powers with their independence or form of government, or to any compact for the purpose of preventing colonization upon the continents of America; but that the people of the United States should be left free to

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act, in any crisis, in such manner as their feelings of friendship towards these republics, and as their own honor and policy, may at any time dictate."

Before our envoys reached Panama the Congress had adjourned.

The other instance—the one where our Government seems to have abandoned the Monroe Doctrine—was the entering into the treaty with England known as the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, in 1850.

This treaty provides that neither Government "will ever obtain or maintain for itself any exclusive control over" the ship canal contemplated in the treaty; that when completed, they "guarantee the protection and neutrality of the canal"; and both governments "agree to extend their protection, by treaty stipulations, to any other practicable communications whether by canal or railway across the isthmus"; and especially those "which are now proposed to be established by the way of Tehuantepec or Panama."

In the correspondence between Mr. Frelinghuysen and Earl Granville in 1882, upon the subject of this treaty,—taking the matter up where it was left off by Mr. Blaine,—Mr. Frelinghuysen maintained that a protectorate by a European nation would be in conflict with the Monroe Doctrine. I will quote Mr. Frelinghuysen's language, as that of one who was considered an able and a safe statesman, and also because it is so recent an expression by one in authority in relation to this doctrine. He says:

"The President believes that the formation of a protectorate by European nations over the isthmus transit would be in conflict with a doctrine which has been for many years asserted by the United States. This sentiment is properly termed a doctrine, as it has no prescribed sanction, and its assertion is left to the exigency

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which may invoke it. It has been repeatedly announced by the Executive Department of this Government, and through the utterances of distinguished citizens; it is cherished by the American people, and has been approved by the Government of Great Britain.

"It is not the inhospitable principle which it is sometimes charged with being, and which asserts that European nations shall not retain dominion on this hemisphere, and that none but republican governments shall here be tolerated; for we well know that a large part of the North American continent is under the dominion of her Majesty's Government, and that the United States were in the past the first to recognize the imperial authority of Dom Pedro in Brazil and of Iturbide in Mexico.

"It is not necessary now to define that doctrine; but its history clearly shows that it at least opposes any intervention by European nations in the political affairs of the American republics."

From the statements of some of our public men and newspapers, it is evident that an opinion prevails, quite extensively, that the Monroe Doctrine makes our nation the protector of all the independent states of this hemisphere, and that, while we cannot control the conduct of these states, we are, nevertheless, bound to espouse their quarrels, if one party thereto is a European nation. While such a position would be an absurd one for us to take, yet, if the Monroe Doctrine is to be maintained as at present understood, we must be prepared to find ourselves, on occasions, in positions of great delicacy and difficulty. As a great, enlightened, and just nation, we are justified in following a policy which our honest judgment tells us is for our best interests. But while we claim complete independence for ourselves, are we not denying such complete independence to our neighbors, when we declare that they cannot, even voluntarily, cede their own territory to a European power, or that they may not invite the protectorate of a European power?

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We certainly should not allow ourselves to be dragged into the unwise and reckless quarrels which those too often very unwisely governed states may bring upon themselves. For such an attitude on our part, would only encourage the insolence of some of those states toward European nations; and that is a quality, in some of them, which does not need to be encouraged. But, if we assume to so far deny the independent sovereignty of those states as to deny their right to cede their territory, or to invite a European protectorate, we certainly must have some corresponding duty toward them. We should doubtless see to it that they are not oppressed or imposed upon in their dealings with European states; but we must at the same time admit that our position in this respect is one which will be maintained, not for their sakes, but for our own, and with a view, regardless of their theoretical rights, to prevent and forestall possible dangers to our own safety and welfare.

It must be evident that it is extremely difficult to frame a definition of our relations with the Spanish-American states which will be satisfactory to them and to us also. In addition to the extreme delicacy inherent in the subject itself, especially from our assumed interests in this whole hemisphere, there is the further fact that the control of the matters involved frequently changes hands; and the different, and sometimes divergent, views of those in control of our affairs change the character and the line of action from that pursued by their predecessors.

For instance, when Mr. Blaine was in the State Department, during the war between Chile and Peru, in 1881, the affairs of Peru became so desperate that it seemed as if she might be wiped out of existence.

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President Grèvy of France proposed a joint intervention by France, England, and the United States. Mr. Blaine declined the invitation, giving as a reason, that while our Government appreciated the motive, yet it gravely doubted "the expediency of a joint intervention with European powers, either by material pressure or by moral or political influence." Mr. Blaine wrote Mr. Trescott, our special envoy, that if our own good offices were refused to prevent the absorption of Peru by Chile, we would be free to "appeal to the other Republics of this Continent to join in an effort to avert" such consequences.

A few months later, Mr. Frelinghuysen, Mr. Blaine's successor in the State Department, wrote Mr. Trescott that the President was "convinced that the United States has no right which is conferred either by treaty stipulations or by public law to impose on the belligerents, unasked, its views of a just settlement."

Mr. Blaine, afterwards, in discussing this episode, in his essay on the foreign policy of the Garfield admintration, said:

"Our own Government cannot take the ground that it will not offer friendly intervention to settle troubles between American countries, unless at the same time it freely concedes to European Governments the right of such intervention, and thus consents to a practical destruction of the Monroe Doctrine and an unlimited increase of European influence on this continent. The late special envoy to Peru and Chile, Mr. Trescott, gives it as his deliberate and published conclusion, that if the instructions under which he set out upon his mission had not been revoked, peace between those angry belligerents would have been established as the result of his labors—necessarily to the great benefit of the United States. If our Government does not resume its efforts to secure peace in South America, some European Gov-

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ernment will be forced to perform that friendly office. The United States cannot play between nations the part of dog in the manger."

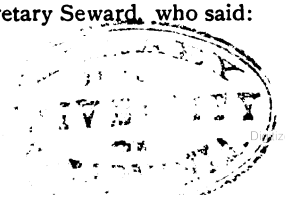
Probably the nearest to a satisfactory definition of our relations with the Spanish-American states that has ever been made, is that contained in a letter from Mr. Seward to General Kilpatrick, our Minister to Chile, on June 2, 1866, at the time of the Spanish bombardment of Valparaiso. Mr. Seward said:

"We maintain and insist with all the decision and energy compatible with our existing neutrality, that the republican system which is accepted by the people in any one of those states shall not be wantonly assailed, and that it shall not be subverted as an end of a lawful war by European powers. We thus give to those republics the moral support of a sincere, liberal, and we think it will appear a useful, friendship. . . . Those who think that the United States could enter as an ally into every war in which a friendly republican state on this continent became involved forget that peace is the constant interest and unswerving policy of the United States."

This was the position which our Government took with regard to Mexico in dealing with the French invasion of that country.

One of the brightest incidents in our national history is the assertion of the Monroe Doctrine in the case of this French invasion.

Spain, England, and France had heavy claims for debts and damages against Mexico, and they formed a convention, by which they agreed, if Mexico refused to settle their claims, they would take possession of Mexican ports and sequestrate the customs toward such payment. That such a step was within the rights of their powers, and not a violation of the Monroe Doctrine, is plainly stated by Secretary Seward, who said:



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"The President does not question that the sovereigns represented have undoubted right to decide for themselves the fact whether they have sustained grievances, and to resort to war against Mexico for the redress thereof, and have a right also to levy the war severally or jointly."

But he asserted the Monroe Doctrine when he said further that the United States was happy to be informed and believe that—

"Neither one nor all of the contracting parties shall, as a result or consequence of the hostilities to be inaugurated under the convention, exercise in the subsequent affairs of Mexico any influence of a character to impair the right of the Mexican people to choose and freely to constitute the form of its own government."

The troops of the allies had scarcely landed at Vera Cruz when the sinister designs of Napoleon became manifest, and Spain and England promptly withdrew from the enterprise. While our hands were full with our Civil War, Napoleon made Maximilian of Austria Emperor of Mexico, and maintained him in his position by French bayonets. Our Government hearing that Austria was also to send troops to support Maximilian, notified the Austrian Government that if it sent any troops for such a purpose, we would no longer "remain as silent and neutral spectators."

Finally, as American troops, under Sheridan, were being sent in large numbers to our Southwestern frontier, Napoleon deemed it wise to withdraw his French troops, and Mexico soon regained her independence.

This case, by reason of the ultimate political designs of the French Emperor, involved a genuine application of the Monroe Doctrine.

The Mexican case and the statements of the Monroe Doctrine made in the diplomatic correspondence relating

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to it show that it is not a violation of that doctrine for a European state to make war upon an American state, if not made for political or ambitious purposes, or even to take possession of the ports or custom-houses of the American state in order to enforce the collection of indemnities or debts.

Of course, if claims of this kind were simply subterfuges to cover designs for acquiring territory, or overthrowing the chosen form of government of the people of such state, the case would be different.

Therefore, when the British recently took possession of the port of Corinto, in Nicaragua, there was no violation of the Monroe Doctrine, although such was loudly and widely asserted to be the case in some quarters. The cause of England's grievance against Nicaragua was an insult to the dignity of the British nation, represented in the person of one of her consular agents. England claimed that some of her private citizens had also been maltreated. But their claims she was willing to leave to a tribunal of arbitration. For the insults to the consul, however, she demanded seventy-five thousand dollars smart money. While this is a large sum of money, it could not be said that its payment would involve or endanger the independence of Nicaragua. For a much less offense than that given to England in this matter—in fact, for injury to the property of private American citizens,—our Government, in 1854, demanded an indemnity of twenty-four thousand dollars from the town of San Juan de Nicaragua, and when it was not promptly paid, an American man-of-war bombarded the town, and afterwards, "in order to inculcate a lesson never to be forgotten," burned such of the buildings as were left standing.

Another conspicuous example, showing that the occu-

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pation of a city or port of an American state for the collection of a just claim is not a violation of the Monroe Doctrine, is found in the correspondence between Mr. Blaine and the Governments of France and Venezuela on the subject of the claims of France against Venezuela. This correspondence is published in the document on foreign relations for 1881. A number of European Governments, and also our own Government, had claims against Venezuela. France had succeeded, however, in anticipating the other Governments in having her claims recognized by Venezuela, by treaty. But Venezuela was not living up to the terms of payment. France contemplated taking possession of Venezuelan ports to collect her claim. Mr. Blaine interceded for Venezuela.

In this correspondence Mr. Blaine refers to the rumored design of France to take "forcible possession of some of the harbors and a portion of the territory of Venezuela in compensation for debts due to citizens of the French Republic."

This last phrase may be an unfortunate use of words. The taking of Venezuelan territory "in compensation for debts" would certainly be a violation of the Monroe Doctrine as declared by Polk and Seward.

To the pathetic appeals of Mr. Comacho, the Venezuelan Minister, Mr. Blaine replied that he did not believe France contemplated such an extreme step. The Venezuelan Minister calls Mr. Blaine's attention to the fact that the people of Venezuela are in great anxiety and distress over the matter, and that they do not believe that the French impatience with them is on account of the small dispute about payments, as the expense France must go to in the armed enforcement of her claims would be far greater than the amount involved. He also calls Mr. Blaine's attention to the ambitious colonial designs of France in Mad-

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agascar and other quarters of the globe, and asserts his belief that France has designs on Venezuelan territory. Our Minister in Paris had like fears. Mr. Blaine does not once in this correspondence, either with the Venezuelan or our own representatives, refer to the Monroe Doctrine; but in his letters to Minister Noyes he claims, and he instructs that Minister to so represent to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, that such a course as that which it was reported France intended to take would be unjust to the other creditors of Venezuela, including the United States. He protested that, if Venezuela was to be treated as an independent nation, all of her creditors must stand on the same footing, and France had no right to priority; if Venezuela was to be regarded as a bankrupt, still all of her creditors should stand on the same footing; and that if France should take the steps reported to be contemplated, the other nations would be deprived of a part of their security. Finally, Mr. Blaine suggests, "without attempting to prescribe or dictate," that the United States place an agent at Caracas, authorized to receive monthly payments from Venezuela, and to distribute the same *pro rata* among the creditor nations; and, in the event of default for a certain time, that this agent should take possession of the custom-houses of the two principal ports of Venezuela and collect the customs. To France he expresses the "solicitude" of our Government "for the higher object of averting hostilities between two republics, for each of which it feels the most sincere and enduring friendship."

That the Monroe Doctrine does not require us to assume the guardianship of our Southern neighbors is further shown by the following occurrences in which our Government did not feel called upon to interfere.

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In 1842, and again in 1844, England blockaded the port of San Juan de Nicaragua. In 1851, England laid an embargo on the traffic of the port of La Union, in Salvador, and blockaded the whole coast of that state.

In 1862 and 1863, England seized a number of Brazilian vessels in Brazilian waters, by way of reprisal for the plundering of an English ship off the coast of Brazil.

In 1838, France blockaded the ports of Mexico, in redress for unsatisfied demands. In 1845, France and England blockaded the ports and coast of Buenos Ayres, for the purpose of securing the independence of Uruguay.

In 1866, Chile invoked the Monroe Doctrine and sought our aid in her war against Spain, which latter power was at the time bombarding Valparaiso. Mr. Seward, as we have seen, wrote to General Kilpatrick, our Minister, defining the position of our Government, and stated in effect that the United States was not bound to take part in the wars in which a South American republic may enter with a European sovereign, when the object of the latter is not political or ambitious in its nature or for the establishment of a monarchy under a European prince, in place of a subverted republic, as in the case of Mexico.

Probably as extreme a case of the assertion of the Monroe Doctrine as has ever occurred in our history is that just made by President Cleveland in the Venezuela boundary controversy. But under the facts of the case, as generally understood, it would seem, if the Monroe Doctrine is to be considered a vital principle of our policy, that the position taken by the President is right and just, and should be maintained. Regardless of whether England is in the right or Venezuela is in the right, the fact remains that there is a dispute of over half a century's duration, as to the proper boundary between the territories of British Guiana and Venezuela.

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The territory involved is a large one—an empire in extent. The portion lying east of what is known as the Schomburgk line is said to be about forty thousand square miles. But the British claim has varied at different times, so that the extreme British claim is more than twice that area. If a war should occur between Venezuela and England, it is certain that Venezuela, whether right or wrong, must go to the wall. If it should be that Venezuela is in the right, and it should come to pass, as the result of such a war, that she would lose this territory, then undoubtedly Venezuela would be oppressed and despoiled of her territory; and her territory would pass to a European power as the result of such oppression and spoliation. It is almost universal among civilized nations to refer disputes as to boundaries which cannot be ascertained accurately to friendly arbitration. England and the United States have frequently resorted to such methods, and will doubtless do so again. The position of England, therefore, in the Venezuela matter seems harsh, unjust, and oppressive, and would seem to indicate a feeling of weakness in the justice of her case. Our Government has asked England to consent to a friendly arbitration. England has hitherto refused to comply with this reasonable and just request, except as to a portion of the territory in dispute. This condition of affairs has called forth a declaration of the Monroe Doctrine, which, while it does not go as far as the declarations of President Polk, has a wider scope, in that it includes the South American continent. The President declares:

"That the traditional and established policy of this Government is firmly opposed to a forcible increase by any European power of its territorial possessions in this continent; that this policy is as well founded in principle as it is strongly supported by numerous precedents;

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that, as a consequence, the United States is bound to protest against the enlargement of area of British Guiana in derogation of the rights and against the will of Venezuela; that, considering the disparity in strength of Great Britain and Venezuela, the territorial dispute between them can be reasonably settled only by friendly, impartial arbitration, and the resort to such arbitration should include the whole controversy, and is not satisfied if one of the powers concerned is permitted to draw an arbitrary line through the territory in debate, and declare that it will submit to arbitration only the portion lying on one side of it."

This new declaration seems to involve a new and additional principle, namely, that in certain cases of disputes between a strong European power and a weak American state, where the disparity of strength is so great that the American state would necessarily suffer defeat as the result of a war, regardless of the justice of its cause, the dispute must be settled by arbitration. This will be especially so, where the result of the controversy might mean the extension of European territory on this hemisphere.

There have always been many who have opposed the Monroe Doctrine as a mischievous one, because, they claim, it is opposed to the principle of non-intervention and neutrality, so earnestly advocated by Washington in his farewell address. But while it may have a tendency to entangle us in the affairs of the states on these American continents, its maintenance must have a tendency to keep us out of the broils of Europe. Jefferson, who was passionately for peace and against entangling alliances, disposes of this objection in his letter to Monroe, where he says:

"But the war in which the present proposition might engage us, should that be its consequence, is not her [England's] war, but ours. Its object is to introduce and

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establish the American system of keeping out of our land all foreign powers, of never permitting those of Europe to intermeddle with the affairs of our nations. It is to maintain our principle, not to depart from it."

And passionately as Jefferson loved France, we find him, in 1802, writing to Livingston, our Minister to that country, with reference to the cession of Louisiana by Spain to Bonaparte, that this act would convert France into "our natural and habitual enemy." He says:

"It is impossible that France and the United States can continue long friends when they meet in so irritable a position. . . . We must be very improvident if we do not begin to make arrangements on that hypothesis. The day that France takes possession of New Orleans fixes the sentence which is to restrain her forever within her low-water mark. It seals the union of two nations who, in conjunction, can maintain exclusive possession of the ocean. From that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation."

As Mr. Morse says, in his biography of Jefferson:

"One almost discredits his own senses as he beholds Jefferson voluntarily proclaiming the banns for these nuptials, which during so many years past would have seemed to him worse than illicit."

Still there can be little doubt that Jefferson proclaimed a great truth. How much of the present ill-feeling toward England in this country is created by her neighborhood to us on this continent?

There can be scarcely a doubt that if this cause of irritability were removed, the popular feeling in this country toward England would become much more patient and friendly. Why all our anxiety and talk of coast and harbor defenses and more ships for our navy? What mean the heavily fortified naval stations maintained by England at Halifax and Esquimalt? Whom do we fear, that we must make mighty preparations for our

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own defense and safety? There is only one answer: England and her dependency on the north.

The absence of powerful neighbors has been an inestimable blessing to the United States in many ways. The nation has thereby been spared much in the possibility of wasteful and ruinous wars, and in the necessity for maintaining powerful standing armies. It has been able to devote all of its wealth and energies to material development and growth, and to the pursuit of the arts of peace. With the exception of the British dominion on our north, the only powers who could do the United States serious injury, in case of war, are the European powers. The acquisition of permanent footholds by those powers, on this hemisphere, would give them a basis of operations, more or less advantageous, against us, in case of war. Powerful and warlike neighbors, with political interests on this hemisphere, would mean for the United States a system akin to the militarism of Europe. If our nation believes that such a condition of things must result from European dominion on this hemisphere, and that its peace and safety is threatened thereby, why is it not justified in resisting the further extension of such dominion? Does the Monroe Doctrine need any more justification than does the doctrine of the "balance of power" in Europe?

Did not Mr. Canning justify the Monroe Doctrine, and was not this what he meant when he boasted: "I called the New World into existence, to redress the balance of the Old?"

"The balance of power" is justified by writers on international and public law, on the ground that a state has a right to protect itself from anything that would endanger its peace or its own existence. If the people of this country believe that the maintenance of the

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Monroe Doctrine is essential to their peace, welfare, and safety, and they have the power to maintain it, why is not their position equally justifiable? One thing is certain — our southern neighbors have not complained of it. The only complaint in that direction is that they expect too much.

From the foregoing review, it must be evident, as stated in the beginning of this essay, that the Monroe Doctrine of to-day is a more comprehensive doctrine than that originally proclaimed by Monroe; and that those who would confine it to the strict letter of Monroe's message are in error. The Monroe Doctrine of to-day is rather the underlying spirit of the original declaration. I cannot better summarize its scope and limitations than by quoting the summary made by Richard Henry Dana, Jr., which was lately amplified by Professor John B. McMaster, and published in the New York *Herald*, about the time of the Corinto affair. Here it is:

1. It must be remembered, in the first place, that the declaration on which Monroe, in 1823, consulted his Cabinet and his two predecessors, Jefferson and Madison, related to the meddling of the powers of Europe in the affairs of American states.

2. That the kind of meddling then declared against was such as tended to control the political affairs of American powers, or was designed to extend to the New World the political systems and institutions of the Old.

3. That the declaration did not mark out any course of conduct to be pursued, but merely asserted that the interposition of the kind mentioned would be considered as dangerous to our peace and safety, and as a manifestation of an unfriendly dispositon toward the United States.

4. That this doctrine has never been indorsed by

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any resolution or act of Congress, but still remains the declaration of a President and his Cabinet.

5. Nevertheless, it is an eminently proper and patriotic doctrine, and as such has been indorsed by the people of the United States, and needs no other sanction. The people, not Congress, rule this country. It is not of the smallest consequence, therefore, whether Congress ever has or ever does indorse the doctrine which very fittingly bears the name of the first President to announce it.

6. The Monroe Doctrine is a simple and plain statement that the people of the United States oppose the creation of European dominion on American soil; that they oppose the transfer of the political sovereignty of American soil to European powers, and that any attempt to do these things will be regarded as "dangerous to our peace and safety."

What the remedy should be for such interposition by European powers the doctrine does not pretend to state. But this much is certain, that when the people of the United States consider anything "dangerous to their peace and safety" they will do as other nations do, and, if necessary, defend their peace and safety with force of arms.

7. The doctrine does not comtemplate forcible intervention by the United States in any legitimate contest, but it will not permit any such contest to result in the increase of European power or influence on this continent, nor in the overthrow of any existing government, nor in the establishment of a protectorate over it, nor in the exercise of any direct control over its policy or institutions. Further than this the doctrine does not go.

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ADDENDUM.

Much history has been made in connection with the Monroe Doctrine in the short interval since the foregoing paper was written.

The passage by Congress of the Venezuelan Boundary Commission bill, in answer to the President's Venezuelan message of December 17, 1895, is a virtual sanction by Congress of the Monroe Doctrine. Hereafter, therefore, it cannot be said, as it could have been said until the passage of that bill, that the doctrine has never been sanctioned by the American Congress in both branches.

In his annual message to Congress, of December 2, 1895, President Cleveland said, that "the traditional and established policy of this Government is firmly opposed to a *forcible* increase by any European power of its territorial possessions in this continent."

As the action of England towards Venezuela, which was then under consideration, would, if the territory in dispute belonged to Venezuela, amount to "a forcible increase" of England's territorial possessions, the President's language is suitable and appropriate to the occasion; and as he was dealing with a specific case, and was not attempting to give a comprehensive definition of the Monroe Doctrine, it can not be said that this statement necessarily involved any narrowing of the scope of the doctrine, as now understood. It is often advisable in controversies of this kind not to state propositions advanced more broadly than the case in hand calls for, thereby not inviting, and perhaps avoiding, unnecessary disputation.

But in his message of December 17, 1895, the President uses this language:

"Great Britain's present proposition has never thus

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far been regarded as admissible by Venezuela, though any adjustment of the boundary line which that country may deem for her advantage, and may enter into of her own free will, cannot, of course, be objected to by the United States."

It must be admitted that, on broad grounds, the menace to the peace and safety of the United States involved in a violation of the Monroe Doctrine, is scarcely less when a substantial increase of European dominion is obtained peaceably than when it is obtained forcibly. And, at first blush, the foregoing statement in the Venezuelan message would seem to imply that a peaceful acquisition of territory would be tolerated.

We find, also, such an authority as Senator Sherman of Ohio, recently made Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, declaring that the President's "assertion of the Monroe Doctrine is a correct one"; and there has been very little dissent from this position by those who admit the applicability of the Monroe Doctrine to the Venezuela case. It is more than likely that this position is held by reason of the peculiar nature of the dispute in question. The position is doubtless founded on the assumption that there is a *bona fide* dispute between two nations whose rights to adjoining territory on this hemisphere are admissible and fully recognized. But if Venezuela, who is directly and vitally concerned in the territory in dispute, shall voluntarily, and without coercion, consent to compromise such dispute, presumably maintained in good faith, then our Government will take that as a conclusive proof that the Monroe Doctrine has not been violated. For the President says that the correspondence with England was conducted in the belief that the Monroe Doctrine was involved in the "pending controversy"; and that

"without any conviction as to the final merits of the

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dispute, but anxious to learn in a satisfactory and conclusive manner whether Great Britain sought, under a claim of boundary, to extend her possessions on this continent without right, or whether she merely sought possession of territory fairly included within her lines of ownership, this Government proposed to the Government of Great Britain a resort to arbitration as a proper means of settling the question, to the end that a vexatious boundary dispute between the two contestants might be determined, *and our exact standing and relation to the controversy might be made clear.*"

It must be conceded that any European nation owning territory on this hemisphere may, in perfect good faith, have a boundary dispute with a neighboring American state; and, having such a *bona fide* dispute, may defend its position to the uttermost. To say that such a boundary dispute, when existing in good faith, and not trumped up by the European state, for the purpose of wrongfully acquiring the territory of the American state, cannot be settled, even if the immediate parties are willing to settle it, without an inquiry on our part as to whether the Monroe Doctrine is involved, would doubtless be going to an unnecessary extreme at the present time in the assertion of that Doctrine.

In the Venezuela correspondence Lord Salisbury claims that England is not violating the Monroe Doctrine. In reply to Mr. Olney, he says:

"Her Majesty's Government have no design to seize territory that properly belongs to Venezuela, or forcibly to extend sovereignty over any portion of her population."

He also says:

"Her Majesty's Government . . . fully concur with the view which President Monroe apparently entertained, that any disturbance of the existing territorial distribution in that hemisphere by any fresh acquisitions

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on the part of any European state would be a highly inexpedient change."

But he denies the applicability of the Monroe Doctrine to the Venezuela case, and bluntly refuses to allow an impartial tribunal to pass on the controversy. Yet if it shall appear, on an impartial investigation, that England is making fresh acquisitions of Venezuela's territory, why is not the doctrine applicable? England, however, has taken the position that she will keep by force as much of the disputed territory as she desires.

As Mr. Olney puts the case, England's position toward Venezuela may be stated thus:

"You can get none of the debatable land by force, because you are not strong enough; you can get none by treaty, because I will not agree, and you can take your chance at getting a portion by arbitration only, if you first agree to abandon to me such other portion as I may designate."

Certainly the acquisition of territory under such circumstances is as much a forcible acquisition as if the territory were taken and held by British troops.

The President's message, in view of its approval by Congress and the people, has been called a contingent declaration of war; for he has advised Congress that when the report of the Commission is made and accepted, it will, in his opinion,—

"be the duty of the United States to resist by every means in its power as a willful aggression upon its rights and interests the appropriation by Great Britain of any lands or the exercise of governmental jurisdiction over any territory which after investigation we have determined of right to belong to Venezuela."

While these are strong words, and may mean war in a contingency, they are simply a reply to England's warlike attitude, which can only mean that force and

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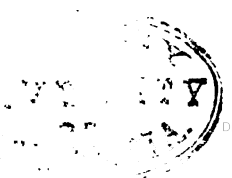
not justice shall decide this controversy. England has refused the peaceful methods of an impartial judgment.

Regardless of the opinion of the United States and of the civilized world, she says, in effect: "This dispute can only be settled my way, or by war." Her attitude, and not ours, is a challenge to war — a fact that is misapprehended by some of our own people, and certainly by the press and people of Europe. All that our Government ever asked was that the dispute should be settled by peaceful means. As England refused to be a party to an impartial arbitration, our Government, in order that it might take further action only if the facts should warrant us, has appointed a Commission of distinguished men to investigate the truth about the matter.

It will be the duty of that Commission to find out, and to inform us and inform the world, whether England, relying upon her superior strength, is attempting to rob an American state of its territory, or is simply defending in a reckless, warlike, and uncivilized manner what is justly her own.

While our attitude may mean war, if we find that England is despoiling Venezuela, and she shall refuse to desist, yet we do not propose to prejudge her case; and we will act only in case it is necessary to protect our cherished principles, one of which is to defend from European aggression the integrity and autonomy of the existing free states on the American hemisphere. Such is the position which the Monroe Doctrine imposes on us. When we abandon it, we will lose the prestige and influence which it gives us among the American states and before the world; and we will lose, also, much of the pride and honor which Americans feel in their country.

Would not peace under such conditions cost too much?



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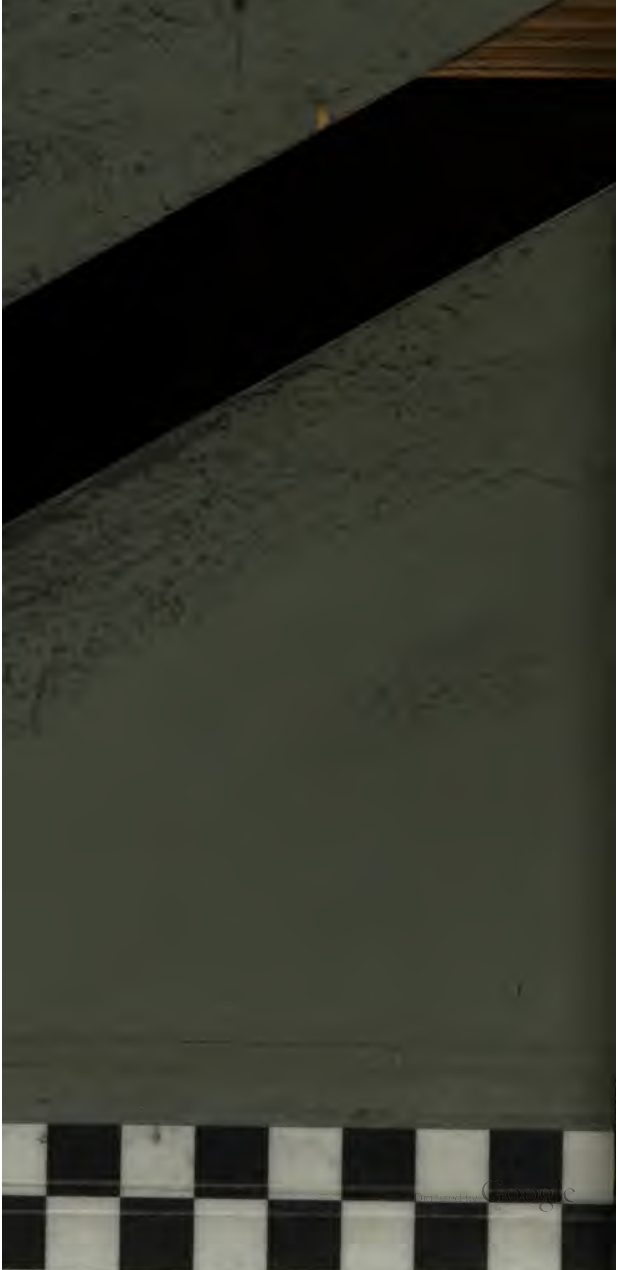
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